OVERVIEW INFORMATION

Federal Agency Name: U. S. Environmental Protection Agency, Gulf of Mexico Program Office

Funding Opportunity Title: Gulf of Mexico Regional Partnerships

Announcement Type: Request for Proposals (RFP)

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 66.475

Funding Opportunity Number: EPA-GM-2011-1

Dates: The deadline for submissions is **5:00 P.M. Central Standard Time (CST), Friday, September 30, 2011.** Proposals must be received by the Agency Contact (see **Section IV Application and Submission Information** of this RFP) by hard copy through the mail or commercial delivery service or through electronic submission through Grants.gov via http://www.grants.gov. All required documents listed in Section IV of this announcement must be attached to the electronic submission as separate Adobe PDF files. All proposals received after the closing date and time will not be considered for funding. For further information, see Section IV.

Summary: This notice announces the availability of funds and solicits proposals for projects that improve the health of the Gulf of Mexico by addressing improved water quality and public health, priority coastal habitat conservation and restoration, more effective coastal environmental education, improved ecosystems integration and assessment, strategic nutrient reductions and coastal community resilience. Projects must actively involve stakeholders and focus on one of the six priority issue areas contained in this document; and/or the goals and objectives of the EPA Gulf of Mexico Program (acres restored, impaired stream/river segments removed and water quality improved.) For more information go to http://www.epa.gov/gmpo

The statutory authority for this action is Section 104 (b)(3) of the Clean Water Act. All proposals submitted will be reviewed for eligibility under this authority. Cooperative Agreements are authorized under this statutory authority to conduct and promote the coordination and acceleration of research, investigations, experiments, training, demonstrations, surveys, and studies relating to the causes, effects, extent, prevention, reduction, and elimination of pollution. The term "pollution" means the man-made or man-induced alteration of the chemical, physical, biological, and radiological integrity of water.

Funding/Awards: The total estimated funding for this competitive opportunity is approximately $3,000,000. EPA anticipates awarding approximately 10 - 50 cooperative agreement(s) from this announcement, subject to availability of funds, the quality of proposals received and other applicable considerations.

CONTENTS BY SECTION

I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Background

The EPA's Gulf of Mexico Program (GMP) mission is to protect, restore and enhance the coastal and marine waters of the Gulf and its natural habitats; to sustain living resources; to protect human health and the food supply; and to ensure the long-term use of the Gulf shores, beaches and waters. To carry out the GMP mission, EPA must continue to maintain and expand the partnerships with State and Federal agencies, Tribes, local governments, academia, regional business and industry, agricultural and environmental organizations, and individual citizens and communities. These partnerships have proven their effectiveness to define and resolve the complex ecological problems that cross State, Federal, and international jurisdictions and boundaries. The GMP strongly encourages partnerships and environmental projects on lands of federally recognized Tribes.

The EPA GMP is working with all our partners to support attainment of environmental and health goals that align with both the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Task Force, the Governors' Gulf of Mexico Alliance, Action Plan II for Healthy and Resilient Coasts, 2009-2014; and, the Mississippi River Gulf of Mexico Watershed Nutrient Task Force, Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan 2008. For more information on these partner organizations, go to http://www.epa.gov/gcertf/, http://www.gulfofmexicoalliance.org/ and http://water.epa.gov/type/watersheds/named/msbasin/upload/2008_8_28_msbasin_ghap2008_update082608.pdf respectively.

B. Scope of Work

This announcement is soliciting proposals from eligible applicants to address the following Priority Issue Areas: Coastal Community Resilience, Ecosystems Integration and Assessment, Environmental Education, Habitat Conservation and Restoration, Nutrient Reduction; and Water Quality.

Each of the Activities listed under the **Priority Issue Areas** below describes some of the expected outputs and outcomes of projects addressing that Action. While Applicants may submit multiple proposals under this announcement, each proposal must be for a separate Priority Issue Area. Proposals addressing more than one Priority Issue Area will be determined "ineligible" in accordance with **Section III, Eligibility Information**, and

rejected. Applicant's proposals may address one or more of the "Activities" under a Priority Issue Area.

C. EPA Strategic Plan Linkage and Anticipated Outcomes, Outputs and Performance Measures

Pursuant to Section 6a of EPA Order 5700.7, "Environmental Results under EPA Assistance Agreements," EPA must link proposed assistance agreements to the Agency's Strategic Plan. EPA also requires that grant applicants and recipients adequately describe environmental outputs and outcomes to be achieved under assistance agreements (see EPA Order 5700.7, Environmental Results under Assistance Agreements, http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/award/5700.7.pdf).

1. **Linkage to EPA Strategic Plan.** This RFP reflects activities described in both the EPA 2006-2011 Strategic Plan posted at (http://www.epa.gov/planandbudget/archive.html) and the EPA 2011-2015 Strategic Plan (posted at http://www.epa.gov/planandbudget/strategicplan.html).

   Awards resulting from this announcement must relate to Goal 2: Protecting America's Waters. Protect and restore our waters to ensure that drinking water is safe, and that aquatic ecosystems sustain fish, plants and wildlife, and economic, recreational, and subsistence activities. Objective 2.2: Protect and Restore Watersheds and Aquatic Ecosystems. Protect the quality of rivers, lakes, streams, and wetlands on a watershed basis, and protect urban, coastal, and ocean waters. or Goal 4: Healthy Communities and Ecosystems, Objective 3: Protect, sustain and restore the health of critical natural habitats and ecosystems. For more information on EPA's Strategic Plan go to: http://www.epa.gov/ocfo/plan/plan.htm

   All proposed projects must demonstrate the linkage to the Strategic Plans and include specific statements describing the environmental results of the proposed project in terms of well-defined outputs, and, to the maximum extent practicable, well-defined outcomes that demonstrate how the project will contribute to the overall goal of restoring and protecting ecosystems. Outputs and outcomes differ both in their nature and in how they are measured. Applicants must discuss environmental outputs and outcomes in their proposed narrative/work plan.

2. Outputs: The term "output" means an environmental activity, effort, and/or associated work products related to an environmental goal and objective that will be produced or provided over a period of time or by a specified date. Outputs may be quantitative or qualitative but must be measurable during an assistance agreement funding period. Expected ***outputs*** from the projects funded under this announcement are listed with each of the Priority Issue Area "Activities" identified in Section E, below. Progress reports and a Final Project Report are also required outputs.

3. Outcomes: The term "outcome" means the result, effect or consequence that will occur from carrying out an environmental program or activity that is related to an

environmental or programmatic goal or objective. Outcomes may be environmental, behavioral, health-related or programmatic in nature, but must be quantitative. They may not necessarily be achievable within an assistance agreement funding period.

4. Performance Measures. The applicant should also develop performance measures they expect to achieve through the proposed activities and describe them in their proposal. These performance measures will help gather insights and will be the mechanism to track progress concerning successful process and output and outcome strategies and will provide the basis for developing lessons to inform future recipients. It is expected that the description of performance measures will include:

> Example: Implement and improve coastal community resilience via new and existing tools, education and training. Local communities face increasing pressure to develop areas along important waterways and water bodies that in turn reduces the protection these natural areas provide during catastrophic events. However, these same communities face yearly natural and man-made disasters which destroy both the natural and "built" environment. New concepts and tools, along with existing tools and communication networks will be applied widely along the Gulf of Mexico in communities both large and small. By applying the tools and bringing state-of-the-science training to all interested community entities, the natural and built environment will be better protected, designed, utilized and enjoyed by residents and visitors alike.

The following are questions to consider when developing output and outcome measures of quantitative and qualitative results:

i) What are the measurable short term and longer term results the project will achieve?

ii) How does the plan measure progress in achieving the expected results (including outputs and outcomes) and how will the approach use resources effectively and efficiently?

D. Statutory Authority. All proposals submitted will be reviewed for eligibility under Section 104 (b)(3) of the Clean Water Act. Assistance Agreements are authorized under this statutory authority to conduct and promote the coordination and acceleration of research, investigations, experiments, training, demonstrations, surveys, and studies relating to the causes, effects, extent, prevention, reduction, and elimination of pollution. The term "pollution" means the man-made or man-induced alteration of the chemical, physical, biological, and radiological integrity of water.

E. Demonstration Projects. Demonstration projects must involve new or experimental technologies, methods, or approaches, where the results of the project will be disseminated so that others can benefit from the knowledge gained in the demonstration project. A project that is accomplished through the performance of routine, traditional, or established practices,

or a project that is simply intended to carry out a task rather than transfer information or advance the state of knowledge is not a demonstration.

F. Priority Issue Areas. This announcement is soliciting proposals from eligible applicants to address these priority issue areas: Coastal Community Resilience, Ecosystems Integration & Assessment, Environmental Education, Habitat Conservation & Restoration, Nutrient Reduction and Water Quality. Each of the Activities listed under the Priority Issue Areas below describes some of the expected outputs and outcomes of projects addressing that Activity. While Applicants may submit multiple proposals under this announcement, each proposal must be for a separate issue area. Proposals addressing more than one issue area will be rejected. Applicant's proposals must address one or more Activities under a priority issue area.

Priority Issue Area #1 - Coastal Community Resilience

Activity 1: Implement components of the Master Plan for the Gulf of Mexico region-wide geospatial infrastructure that will provide for the measurement of millimeter-scale changes in land elevations and water levels over the long term.

Output(s):

- Site and install one or more Continuously Operating Reference Stations (CORS) to standards specified in the CORS Installation Guidelines within one kilometer of a Tide Station with at least 30 years of continuous data collected in compliance with NOAA standards. The CORS must be located on property under direct and perpetual control of a federal, state, county, or municipal government entity, including state public universities. The CORS must be located and installed within the geographic coastal boundaries of one of the EPA recognized estuary programs in the Gulf of Mexico region.
- Conduct a first order leveling connection between the newly installed CORS and the Tide Station.
- Formally enroll the CORS installation(s) into NOAA's CORS Network.

Outcome(s):

- Local science and management agencies can incorporate accurate local information on coastal subsidence rates and local sea level trends into development plans and coastal hazard mitigation and adaptation strategies.
- Increased knowledge of localized risk and consequences of sea-level change for current and future residents in those communities.

Activity 2: Develop and implement, or further develop, a Gulf-wide regional training program in collaboration with key stakeholder groups (e.g. SeaGrant, State Professional Licensing Boards, Continuing Education providers, Community Rating System) to provide professional development credits for professionals (e.g. - architects, engineers, planners, city and county officials and leaders) to address coastal community resilience, methods and

approaches for mitigating the risks associated with coastal hazards. The training program must combine webinar-based and workshop series instruction.

Output(s):

- A Gulf-wide accredited training program is developed and implemented to provide professional development and continuing education credits.
- Webinar-based training modules are developed for delivery through the existing StormSmartCoast.org and StormSmartConnect networks in close coordination with the Coastal Community Resilience Work Group of the Gulf of Mexico Governors' Alliance.

Outcome(s):

- Professionals receive valuable community resilience training.
- Continuing education programs increase awareness, and knowledge of the planning and design professionals in local communities, resulting in coastal community resilience concepts being incorporated into long-term vision and planning.

Activity 3: Work with partners in an underserved and underrepresented community to revitalize hurricane or oil-spill impacted areas which suffer from economic, ecological, and social losses in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida and Texas. Develop and implement a plan, or support an existing community plan, to build resilience in order to sustain and grow the community's economic prosperity. Proposals with an existing Gulf-wide focus and experience with working with under-privileged, environmentally and economically distressed communities are strongly encouraged.

Output(s):

- Training to inform and educate residents/public about community challenges.
- A community plan is developed, or expanded, which provides enhancements for coastal communities, ecosystems, and economies to become more resilient to coastal hazards and catastrophes.

Outcome(s):

- Increased awareness of risks impacting the community.
- Improved environmental and economic conditions and way of life among community residents.

Priority Issue Area #2 - Ecosystems Integration and Assessment

Action: Data Access and Acquisition

Activity: Increase the awareness of and usage of Ecowatch by environmental resource managers, scientists, state and local government agencies, educational institutions, etc., by developing a comprehensive outreach, marketing and training strategic plan. This plan

should include methods to establish a relationship with international data managers and increase input into and access to international ecological data in Ecowatch.

Output:

- A comprehensive Strategic Plan is developed and implemented to increase the awareness of usage of Ecowatch. Working together, environmental resource managers, scientists and other partners develop the Strategic Plan which includes outreach, marketing and training components.

Outcome(s):

- Through a collaborative effort, a comprehensive Ecowatch Strategic Plan is developed and implemented.
- Invaluable Gulf of Mexico environmental data are readily available for use by resource managers.

Action: Provide collaboration opportunities for the various living marine resource organizations to support the management of the Gulf as a large marine ecosystem.

Activity: Continue to identify Living Marine Resource (LMR) data that would be of use to management agencies and organizations Gulf wide. Identify gaps of desirable, but missing LMR data, including International LMR data. Develop and implement strategies and plans to obtain that data.

Output(s):

- LMR data continues to be identified that is useful to management agencies and organizations Gulf wide.
- Data gaps of desirable, yet missing, LMR data are identified. Plans and strategies are development and implemented to obtain missing data.

Outcome:

- Collaborative partnerships are expanded to enhance the conservation of living marine resources. This leads directly to better coordination and management of the Gulf as a large marine ecosystem.

Action: Develop an Emergent Wetlands Status and Trends Report to provide scientists and decision makers with regional information to guide management decisions.

Activity: Convene a panel of experts to develop a framework for a "Gulf Wide State of the Gulf Report (Gulf Report)". The panel will provide insight on input data, temporal scope and data gap analysis as the Gulf Report framework is developed. Using the framework for the Gulf Report, develop an outline for a Gulf of Mexico "Report Card". Using Ecowatch, and a methodology developed by the panel of experts, conduct a gap analysis on data to integrate into the Gulf Report. Prepare the Gulf Report and the Gulf of Mexico Report Card

in cooperation with the Alliance EIA Team. Provide workshop support and travel funding for the EIA Team State Leads, subject matter experts and other non-Federal participants, as needed.

Output(s):

- A "Gulf Wide State of the Gulf Report" Framework is developed and used to develop an outline for a Gulf of Mexico "Report Card".
- Ecowatch is used to help conduct a gap analysis on which data components are needed to complete the Gulf Report.

Outcome:

- A Gulf of Mexico Report Card is developed which can be applied to show current status, trends and improvements over time.

Action: Determine socioeconomic values of critical coastal ecosystem services in the Gulf region.

Activity A: Utilize the core suite of ecosystem services for important habitats within the Gulf of Mexico; and, use the ecological units defined in the Coastal and Marine Ecological Classification Standard and develop methodology to identify ecological integrity indicators for these services. **Activity B:** Utilizing the core suite of ecosystem services for important Habitats within the Gulf of Mexico, establish and apply these indices and methodology in a demonstration or pilot project.

Core Ecosystem Services: Nutrient Balance, Hydrological Balance, Climate Balance, Pollutant Attenuation, Gas Balance, Water Quality, Water Quantity, Air Supply, Food, Raw Materials, Medicinal Resources, Ornamental Resources, Science and Education, Biological Interactions, Soil and Sediment Balance, Spiritual and Historic, Aesthetics and Existence, Recreational Opportunities, Hazard Moderation.

Output(s):

- Using the "Coastal and Marine Ecological Classification System", a methodology is developed which identifies ecological integrity indicators for ecosystem services.
- Quality indices for the core suite of ecosystem services is established

Outcome:

- A better understanding of the socioeconomic value of natural systems leads to improved and more responsible resource management and societal decisions.

Priority Issue Area #3 - Environmental Education

Action: Increase awareness and promote action among Gulf citizens by engaging in educational and outreach activities.

Activity: Partner with agencies that have restoration and conservation efforts underway to develop and implement an environmental education/outreach program, one per Gulf State, to promote the Gulf of Mexico Alliance actions and raise awareness of the Gulf resources (i.e., seagrass, oyster reefs, marshes, and other similar habitats). The goal of this activity is to create and promote adult environmental education opportunities through coordinated, non-traditional partnerships with civic organizations.

Output:

- Environmental education/outreach programs are developed and implemented which enhance restoration and conservation efforts Gulf-wide.

Outcome:

- Increased sense of protection for preserving and restoring the Gulf.

Action: Expand public awareness efforts to connect the Gulf and its relevance to the lives of citizens.

Activity: Utilize multimedia, current, or advanced technologies to disseminate Gulf of Mexico Alliance messages to Gulf citizens and up the watershed; partnering with the media to expand messaging is strongly encouraged. The project is expected to enhance public awareness and incite interest among citizens in becoming stewards of the Gulf.

Output:

- Massive promotion of the Gulf of Mexico Alliance and the creation of media partnerships.

Outcome:

- Gulf Coast residents and citizens up the watershed have increased environmental awareness and understanding of the Gulf of Mexico and its ecosystems.

Action: Increase environmental literacy within the K through 20 audiences by developing, implementing, expanding, and enhancing specific environmental education programs.

Activity 1: Develop and implement a pilot service learning community outreach program for high school students or partner with agencies that offer service learning programs and clearly state how leveraging resources lead to i.e., an increase in the total of students participating and enhanced understanding of the Gulf resources. The service learning program must promote environmental learning through hands-on activities. The target audience is schools with a majority enrollment of underserved and underrepresented students.

Output:

- The development or expansion of a service learning program that promotes environmental learning and values.

Outcome:

- Minority students will potentially pursue careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics; through participants' experiences, peers and family members will become environmentally adept.

Activity 2: Develop a Gulf of Mexico Student Exchange using the Gulf Coastal Ecosystem Learning Centers-Audubon Aquarium of Americas located in New Orleans, LA; Texas State Aquarium located in Corpus Christi, TX; Dauphin Island Sea Lab Estuarium located in Dauphin Island, AL, Gulf Coast Research Laboratory Marine Education Center located in Ocean Springs, MS; Florida Aquarium located in Tampa, FL; and Veracruz Aquarium located in Veracruz, Mexico as environmental educational institutions providing Gulf of Mexico Alliance related lectures (using five of the six priority issues: water quality, nutrients, ecosystem valuations, habitat restoration, and coastal resilience) and experiential learning activities. The goal of the exchange is to offer underserved and underrepresented students opportunities to travel from their home states to others (note: students must reside in of the one of the U.S. Gulf Coast States or Veracruz, Mexico to be eligible to participate) to learn about cultural differences and understand the value of the Gulf ecosystem. Proposals with multi-collaborators are encouraged.

Output:

- The development of a program whereby students travel to other states (national and international) to learn about the Gulf ecosystem and gain insight as to how cultural practices impact the environment.

Outcome:

- Student's appreciation for environmental science increased; the interconnectedness of the aforementioned states and efforts undertaken to improve environmental quality will become apparent; and career opportunities in the field of environmental conservation and the alike are pursued.

Activity 3: Develop and implement a strategy for involving underserved and underrepresented residents in efforts to improve environmental quality in their communities. The environmental efforts must promote awareness and provide for remediation of environmental hazards that fall within the Gulf of Mexico Alliance's priories and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's purview. Proposals from agencies/organizations with an existing Gulf-wide focus and experience with working with under-privileged and environmentally distressed communities are strongly encouraged!

Output:

- The development of a strategy to engage residents in efforts to improve environmental conditions in their communities.

Outcome:

- Citizens will work with academia, non-profits, non-governmental organizations, federal, state and local government to rid communities of environmental hazards and residents will become environmental stewards.

Action: Include the economic value of Gulf ecosystems in environmental education.

Activity: Collect pertinent research on the economic value of the Gulf and transform collected information into brochures, pamphlets, websites, or etc. The information must be formatted in a manner useful to decision-makers, formal and informal educators, stakeholders and other target audiences.

Output:
- Educational materials/websites created that depict the economic value of the Gulf.

Outcome:
- Citizens are stewards in preserving the Gulf; decision-makers (and others targeted) have an enhanced understanding of the economic value of the Gulf and needed tools or policies to maintaining its richness.

Priority Issue Area #4 - Habitat Conservation and Restoration

Action: Build upon existing success of the Alliance partners in addressing public issues impeding habitat conservation and restoration.

Activity 1: Work with partners to recommend revisions to the Federal Standard such that the beneficial use of dredged sediment for conservation and/or restoration is given high priority with regard to such sediment's economic benefit for projects and environmental degradation is considered an economic cost.

Output:
- Initiate a policy and economic study of the relationship between the Federal Coastal Zone Management Act and the determination and enforcement (implementation?) of the Federal Standard.

Outcome:
- The identification of how Federal Coastal Zone Management Act policies can presently be applied to decisions on beneficial use, and the comparative benefits that legislative and/or policy changes will have on future beneficial use decisions.

Activity 2: Identify administrative, policy, and legal (regulatory) processes in Federal Agencies that may either facilitate or impede habitat restoration and conservation project planning and implementation in the Gulf coast region.
Output(s):
- Conduct working sessions to identify, discuss, and recommend improvements to habitat conservation, acquisition, and restoration funding programs to enhance their ability to support conservation and restoration efforts in the Gulf coast region.

- Provide draft recommendations for changes in funding policies to the appropriate local, State and/or Federal agencies.

- Improved funding polices to increase the effectiveness of existing state and federal habitat restoration and conservation funding programs in the Gulf coast region.

Action: Provide scientific and technical solutions to improve on-the-ground restoration results.

Activity 1: Initiate projects to conserve, enhance or create coastal habitat acreage by developing scientific and technical solutions to control shoreline erosion, remove detrimental invasive species, restore oyster reefs and/or restore coastal wetlands. This work should use innovative scientific and technical solutions. Develop new technologies or adapt established technologies and promote successful projects and their associated technologies Gulf wide for future projects. Partner with local, state and federal agencies, business and industry, National Estuary Programs (or similar programs) and/or non-government organizations to identify critical areas in the Gulf of Mexico region where on-the-ground efforts will produce visible results.

Output:
- Essential and vital coastal habitat is conserved, restored and/or created in the Gulf of Mexico region.

Outcome(s):
- Significant acres of coastal habitat are restored, enhanced or created.
- Build partnerships within the Gulf Region, as well as share information and technology throughout the Gulf via these partnerships. Conserved, restored or created habitat has the following potential benefits: improved recreational and commercial fisheries, improved water quality, enhanced protection during storm events and enhanced aesthetic appeal, which can promote tourism and the economic benefits associated with tourism.

Action: Build upon existing success of the Alliance partners of the Gulf Regional Sediment Management Master Plan. Develop and implement project(s) that use dredged material and other sediment resources for habitat restoration.

Activity 1: Conduct projects to conserve, restore, enhance or create acreage of coastal habitat using dredged material and other sediment resources. Develop new technologies or adapt established technologies and promote successful dredging projects and their associated technologies Gulf wide for future projects. Partner with local, state and federal agencies, business and industry, the National Estuary Programs and/or non-government. Produce visible results.

Output:

- Essential and vital acreage is conserved, restored, enhanced and/or created in habitats in the Gulf of Mexico region using dredged material.

Outcome(s):

- Conserve, restore or create significant acres of coastal habitat.
- Build and strengthen partnerships within the Gulf Region, as well as share information and technology throughout the Gulf via these partnerships. Conserved, restored and created habitat has the following potential benefits: improved recreational and commercial fisheries, improved water quality, enhanced protection during storm events and enhanced aesthetic appeal, which can promote tourism and the economic benefits associated with tourism.

Activity 2: Conduct projects to conserve, restore, enhance or create coastal habitat acreage by restoring hydrologic function to flooded coastal forests on sites created with dredged material. Develop new technologies or adapt established technologies and promote successful projects and their associated technologies Gulf wide for future projects. Partner with local, state and federal agencies, business and industry, the National Estuary Programs and/or non-government organizations to identify critical areas in the Gulf of Mexico region where on-the-ground efforts will produce visible results.

Output:

- Essential and vital acreage is conserved, restored and/or created in habitats in the Gulf of Mexico region by restoring hydrologic functions that improve coastal forest productivity and vitality to areas which have lost those functions, which help to ensure forest health and regeneration.

Outcome(s):

- Significant acres of coastal habitat are enhanced, improved or created.
- Build and expand partnerships within the Gulf Region, as well as share information and technology throughout the Gulf via these partnerships. Conserved, restored and enhanced habitat has the following potential benefits: improved recreational and commercial fisheries, improved water quality, enhanced protection during storm events and enhanced aesthetic appeal, which can promote tourism and the economic benefits associated with tourism.

Action: Reversing the Downward Trend in Habitat and Ecosystem Service

Activity 1: Identify and prioritize sites in need of restoration and or conservation activities within a specific geographically defined/designated Gulf of Mexico Coastal area. Ascertain the factors that are causing, or threatening to cause, impairments to that geographically defined/designated area (For example: Galveston or Mobile Bay). Develop a blueprint that identifies and prioritizes on-the-ground conservation and restoration projects of an area, with the intent to fill gaps in information base needed for effective habitat restoration efforts. The blueprint should also include cost, completion time, methods and resources needed to complete the projects. Partner with local, state and federal agencies; business and industry;

local schools and educational partners; the National Estuary Programs; and/or non-government organizations to identify critical areas within that defined Gulf of Mexico region where on-the-ground efforts will produce measurable results with the goal of restoring, enhancing the natural function of, or conserving wetland habitat. The use of community volunteers, educational institutions and their students, and the application of new, innovative approaches in this activity are encouraged.

Output:

- An inventory of sites is developed and widely distributed. The inventory of sites serves as the basis for coordinating and complimenting existing and future planned conservation or restoration of habitat projects.

Outcome:

- Conserved, restored and created habitat have the following potential benefits: improved recreational and commercial fisheries, improved water quality, enhanced protection during storm events.

Activity 2: Initiate on-the-ground projects to conserve, restore, enhance or create coastal habitat acreage. This could include restoring hydrologic function to marshes, sand dunes or oyster reef restoration, etc. Develop new technologies or adapt established technologies and promote successful projects and their associated technologies Gulf wide for future projects. Partner with local, state and federal agencies, business and industry, the National Estuary Programs, non-government and non-profit organizations to identify critical areas in the Gulf of Mexico region where on-the-ground efforts will produce visible results.

Output:

- Essential and vital acreages is conserved, restored and/or enhanced in habitats in the Gulf of Mexico region.

Outcome(s):

- Through a strong and visible partnership effort, significant acres of coastal habitat are restored, enhanced or created.
- Partnerships are strengthened and expanded within the Gulf Region, as well as share information and technology throughout the Gulf via these partnerships.

Activity 3: Design and implement projects to restore, enhance, or create acreage of coastal habitat by restoring fisheries access. Develop new technologies or adapt established technologies and promote successful projects and their associated technologies Gulf wide for future projects. Partner with local, state and federal agencies, business and industry, the National Estuary Programs and/or non-government organizations to identify critical areas in the Gulf of Mexico region where on-the-ground efforts will produce visible results.

Output:

- Essential and vital acreages is created, conserved, restored and/or enhanced in habitats in the Gulf of Mexico region by restoring access to streams/coastal waters that provide life cycle habitat enhancement including breeding grounds and habitat.

Outcome(s):

- Significant acres of coastal habitat are restored, enhanced or created.
- Partnerships within the Gulf Region are initiated and expanded; information and technology from these projects is shared throughout the Gulf of Mexico.

Priority Issue Area #5 - Nutrient Reduction

Action: Characterize Nutrients and Nutrient Impacts to Coastal Ecosystems in the Gulf of Mexico

Activity 1: Conduct "Nutrient Sources, Fate, Transport and Effects Studies" within coastal ecosystems of the Gulf of Mexico to establish relationships between nutrients and ecosystem response (in coordination with the Governors' Gulf of Mexico Alliance (GOMA or Alliance) Nutrient Reduction Team). Apply the Nutrient Criteria Research Framework (Framework) during the NSFTE Study(ies). Conduct the NSFTE Study(ies), compile and analyze any new data collected (if new data is needed), and all other existing data pertinent to the selected coastal ecosystem; and, develop pilot numeric estuarine criteria. Present the results to the Alliance Nutrient Reduction Team. Provide workshop support and travel funding for the Nutrient Team State Leads, subject matter experts and other non-Federal participants, as needed.

Output:

- Numeric nutrient criteria are developed for a Gulf of Mexico coastal ecosystem.

Outcome:

- Increased knowledge is gained about a Gulf of Mexico coastal ecosystem and the relationship between nutrients and ecosystem response. This critical information is used to support resource managers and decision makers develop numeric nutrient criteria.

Activity 2: Develop and implement "Regional Approach to Estimating Ecosystem and Socioeconomic Impacts due to Excess Nutrients (Regional Approach)". Identify methods and data needed to develop the Regional Approach; conduct a literature review of methodologies for the characterization of ecosystem and socioeconomic impacts of excess nutrients; and evaluate their applicability. The Regional Approach must allow for and include site-specific flexibility. Identify existing models of ecosystem and socioeconomic impacts and determine their effectiveness in modeling quantitative relationships between nutrients and the temporal and spatial extent of ecosystem responses. Apply the Regional Approach to a Pilot Project Gulf coast estuary.

Output(s):

- A Regional Approach is developed, applied and evaluated in at least one pilot estuary in the Gulf of Mexico.
- The findings from the pilot study is developed, presented and finalized in cooperation with the Alliance Nutrient Reduction Team. A Report is generated that discusses existing

models for nutrient dynamics, ecosystem impacts, and socioeconomic impacts, as well as identifying opportunities for the integration of these models.

Outcome(s):

- The Regional Approach is applied gulf-wide and supports the development of nutrient management goals.
- Improved science and tools provide greater knowledge of nutrient dynamics, and the overall ecosystem and socioeconomic impacts due to excess nutrients in at least one Gulf coast ecosystem.

Activity 3: Identify and apply regional models to characterize sources, loads, ecosystem responses, and socioeconomic impacts of nutrient pollution in at least one Gulf coast ecosystem pilot project. Present the results of the pilot project to the Alliance Nutrient Reduction Team. Include workshop support and travel funding for the Nutrient Team State Leads, subject matter experts and other non-Federal participants.

Output(s):

- A report on the effectiveness of existing models to characterize sources and loads is produced. This report includes measures taken to address impartiality of the model evaluation procedure. Include a detailed section on the effectiveness of existing models applied to characterize socioeconomic impacts of nutrient pollution.
- Data is shared with all partners currently working on regional nutrient models.
- The pilot project reports on the effectiveness of the application of regional models used to characterize socioeconomic impacts of nutrient pollution.
- Results from the pilot project are released and compared to existing regional models to evaluate the effectiveness of regional models in adequately characterizing sources, loads, ecosystem responses and socioeconomic impacts at the local scale.

Outcome(s):

- Integrated models are applied to estimate nutrient sources and loads; and relate the source/loading with the expected and then observed ecosystem responses and socioeconomic impacts.
- Resource management awareness of the effectiveness and appropriate use(s) of models and their applications for characterizing sources and loads, socioeconomic impacts and ecosystem responses increases gulf-wide.
- Communication is increased between modelers and resource managers to improve the models for characterizing sources/loads, socioeconomic impacts and ecosystem responses.

Activity 4: Characterize the connectivity and contribution of adjacent, freshwater systems which contribute nutrient loads to coastal ecosystems in the Gulf of Mexico using a regionally consistent methodology. Compile information which identifies all active monitoring programs that are located in adjacent, freshwater systems. Determine the minimum data needed in order to adequately conduct the characterization for connectivity, the flow dynamics and the direct contributions of the adjacent freshwater system. Pilot the methodology in at least one coastal watershed and refine the methodology, as needed.

Output:

- A Pilot Project is conducted in a Gulf of Mexico coastal watershed. A Report of Findings is generated in which the minimum data needs to adequately characterize the connectivity, flow dynamics, and direct contributions of adjacent freshwater systems (including groundwater) are identified.

Outcome(s):

- The connectivity and contribution of adjacent, freshwater systems which contribute nutrient loads to the coastal ecosystems in the Gulf of Mexico are better understood scientifically and communicated to the resource managers.
- Consensus is reached on a regionally consistent methodology to characterize the connectivity and contribution of adjacent, freshwater systems, including groundwater, to the Gulf of Mexico watersheds.

Activity 5: Using data collected for the National Coastal Assessment, develop environmental and biological indicators and indices that are sensitive to nutrient concentrations. Identify and develop indicators for ecosystem stressors (such as hydrology and land use).

Output(s):

- A Macrobenthic Index of Biological Integrity (IBI) is developed for all five Gulf of Mexico States.
- An IBI Report is produced and widely distributed which identifies the environmental factors, biological parameters and ecological relationships that are responsive to nutrients and drivers for assessing biological health.

Outcome:

- Gulf-wide increased awareness of the relationship between the health of the macrobenthic species and nutrient pollution. This information is critical to the development of scientifically defensible numeric nutrient criteria for Gulf of Mexico coastal ecosystems.

Action: Coordinate efforts to support State development of nutrient criteria for Gulf of Mexico Coastal Ecosystems.

Activity 1: Develop and implement a gulf-wide classification system for coastal waters and estuaries for use in nutrient criteria development and management. Compile existing information about classification systems and environmental condition indices. Implement a pilot project to calibrate and validate the recommended classification system. Prepare a Report of Findings and present to the Alliance Nutrient Reduction Team. Provide workshop support and travel funding for the Nutrient Team State Leads, subject matter experts and other non-Federal participants, as needed.

Output(s):

- A classification system is applied using existing data for Gulf coast waters and estuaries.

- Through the implementation of a pilot project, the newly developed gulf-wide classification system is validated and refined, as needed.

Outcome(s):
- All five Gulf States have participated in the development of a gulf-wide classification system for coastal waters. Gulf States use the gulf-wide classification system to assist in the development of numeric nutrient criteria.
- Environmental and biological indicators that are sensitive to nutrient levels are included as a component of the Gulf of Mexico Alliance Report Card.

Activity 2: Organize and conduct an annual conference on coastal nutrient criteria development for a period of four years. Identify themes and focus areas, sponsors (if appropriate) and other forms of support, conduct the registration and manage all conference support needs. The annual conference may be linked with appropriate Alliance Water Quality meetings or workshops. Provide limited travel support for Nutrient Team State Leads, subject matter experts and other non-Federal participants, as needed.

Output(s):
- Communication and resource sharing is promoted through the interactive nature of annual working meetings. The Gulf States identify common needs and priorities, share data and approaches; all working together to facilitate a regional approach to nutrient criteria development and management.
- Coordinated nutrient related research is made available Gulf-wide; States discuss and develop draft numeric nutrient criteria in a coordinated manner; and, regional communication is improved.

Outcome:
- Working together, the five Gulf States meet and provide a forum that encourages the establishment of a consistent and scientifically-defensible coastal nutrient criteria development process. The establishment of appropriate and protective nutrient criteria will, in turn, increase the productivity and economic viability of the Gulf region.

Action: Increase regional and national coordination to reduce Hypoxia in Gulf of Mexico coastal waters and estuaries.

Activity 1: Develop a framework for the minimum monitoring necessary to characterize dissolved oxygen stress and hypoxic events including monitoring strategies for estuaries and coastal waters with a high frequency of hypoxic events. Present the framework to the Alliance Nutrient Reduction Team. Provide workshop support and travel funding for the Nutrient Team State Leads, subject matter experts and other non-Federal participants, as needed.

Output(s):
- Early warning indicators of eutrophication susceptibility (i.e. adverse impacts to the biological communities) for coastal waters are developed.

- An integrated model is developed that provides regional comparability and predictions for hypoxia and its impacts.

Outcome:

- A framework for the characterization of dissolved oxygen stress and hypoxic events is developed and documented.

Activity 2: Develop and implement a state-wide nitrogen and phosphorus pollution reduction strategy, through a strong and comprehensive partnership, that 1) is based on the "Recommended Elements of a State Framework for Managing Nitrogen and Phosphorus Pollution" (link: http://water.epa.gov/scitech/swguidance/standards/criteria/nutrients/upload/memo_nitrogen_framework.pdf) and 2) supports the goals and actions of the Mississippi River/Gulf of Mexico Watershed Nutrient Task Force, as identified in the *Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan 2008* (in particular Action #1) (http://water.epa.gov/type/watersheds/named/msbasin/actionplan.cfm). EPA recognizes that the best approaches will entail States, federal agencies, municipalities, nongovernmental organizations, conservation districts, private landowners and other stakeholders working collaboratively to develop watershed-scale plans that target the most effective practices to the areas and acres are in most need. An effective proposal would include a mix of comprehensive planning and demonstration watershed implementation, and could include the following four elements, in roughly the proportions identified:

1) 30 percent – Establish a strong and comprehensive partnership across the state involving state agencies, federal agencies, local agencies and municipalities, nongovernmental organizations, conservation districts, private landowners and other stakeholders, and with input from the partnership, finalize a state nitrogen and phosphorus pollution reduction strategy based on the recommended Framework that identifies specific implementation goals and milestones for all sources of point and nonpoint pollution and includes technical assistance for implementation.
2) 20 percent – Implement the state nitrogen and phosphorus pollution reduction strategy in at least three to four priority demonstration watersheds in the state (identified in elements one and two of the recommended Framework).
3) 30 percent – Complete and implement (in the priority demonstration watersheds) the agricultural section of the state nitrogen and phosphorus pollution reduction strategy based on element four of the recommended Framework. Engage producers, technical experts, and other stakeholders in the local communities to establish quantitative targets for load reductions to guide practice implementation (identify the expected area and the practices that need to be established on those participating acres, and develop the conservation plan that will achieve the goals). At least a subset of the priority demonstration watersheds should overlap with USDA Mississippi River Basin Initiative watersheds where states identify those as high priority watersheds.
4) 20 percent – Work with state agencies, federal agencies, nongovernmental organizations, conservation districts, private landowners and other stakeholders to coordinate and enhance watershed scale (approximately the 12-digit HUC scale) monitoring (nitrogen, phosphorus, flow, etc.) and work to ensure this data

supplements the USDA Mississippi River Basin Initiative partner organizations' edge-of-field monitoring strategies.

An effective proposal would clearly address how the state nitrogen and phosphorus pollution reduction strategy will be implemented or sustained through innovative efforts within the state including leveraging resources from and partnerships with non-federal entities.

Output(s):

- Agencies and producers have a comprehensive, quantitative, and accountable nitrogen and phosphorus pollution reduction strategy that can be used to secure funding for full implementation. Make publically available the state-wide nitrogen and phosphorus pollution reduction strategy via websites and other formats.
- Partnerships are established or expanded that work together to achieve significant nitrogen and phosphorus load reductions and recognize common quantifiable goals for which involved agencies and organizations are accountable.
- Effective conservation plans are implemented for farms within each priority watershed.
- Demonstration monitoring network is in place throughout demonstration priority watersheds.

Outcome(s):

- The water quality data collected throughout the state is significantly increased and shared through electronic and other formats.
- Water quality is significantly improved and nitrogen and phosphorus concentrations and loads are reduced in and from the priority demonstration watersheds.
- The nutrient reduction activities in the demonstration watersheds are tracked over time to gain a better understanding of how nutrient reduction actions are linked to reduced nutrient conditions in streams.

Activity 3: Support the goals and actions of the Mississippi River/Gulf of Mexico Watershed Nutrient Task Force as identified in the Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan II. Participate in and promote information and technology exchange between upper and lower Mississippi River Basin states and organizations. Develop and implement a "Watershed Nutrient Reduction Plan"; and then conduct a pilot project which significantly reduces Gulf hypoxia in a State priority watershed. Present the results to the Alliance Nutrient Reduction Team. Provide workshop support and travel funding for the Nutrient Team State Leads, subject matter experts and other non-Federal participants, as needed.

Output(s):

- Successful completion of a pilot project in a State priority watershed.
- Watershed nutrient reduction plans are complete and include strategies for reducing Gulf hypoxia in state selected priority watersheds.

Outcome(s):

- The number of nutrient reduction plans developed in the MS River Basin is increased.

- Additional partnerships with upstream states are formed to increase awareness of hypoxia, its causes, and its impacts to stakeholders, coastal managers, decision makers and the general public.

Action: Reduce Excess Nitrogen and Phosphorus Inputs to Gulf of Mexico Coastal Waters and Estuaries.

Activity 1: Develop a nutrient module of outreach materials to be distributed through the Gulf of Mexico Alliance Environmental Education Network (EEN) clearinghouse website. Types of outreach material may include: electronic media (television/radio ads; internet, such as GOMA EEN website, Facebook, Twitter); printed material (brochures, newspaper/periodical articles); and workshops with groups such as the Master Gardener Program.

Output(s):
- Targeted educational material is developed, advertised and distributed to audiences through various media.
- Method for measuring "knowledge gained" and "behaviors changed" is developed and utilized.
- Short stories sharing "lessons learned" are composed and distributed through GOMA EEN website and other media outlets.

Outcome(s):
- Increased awareness occurs about the impacts of excessive nutrients to the environment and the economy.
- Short and long term management activities to reduce nutrient loadings are available to the public.

Activity 2: Partnerships within adjacent watersheds are developed (and/or expanded) to implement nutrient reduction activities. Develop and implement pilot projects which apply innovative nutrient reduction technologies and significantly reduce nutrient loading. The pilot projects can address wastewater, storm water, atmospheric emissions or agricultural drainage water reuse. The pilot project Reports of Findings are presented to the Alliance Nutrient Reduction Team. Provide workshop support and travel funding for the Nutrient Team State Leads, subject matter experts and other non-Federal participants, as needed.

Output:
- New partners and partnerships in adjacent watersheds are developed. The new partners and partnerships identify mutually beneficial pilot projects where innovative nutrient reduction technologies are implemented, evaluated and reported.

Outcome(s):
- New partners are brought into the Alliance Nutrient Reduction Team who work in adjacent watersheds implementing best management practices which measurably reduce nutrient pollution within and downstream of the watershed.

- Communication among watershed partner's increases and pilot projects are implemented which significantly reduce nutrient pollution. Results are widely shared and used to prepare and implement future joint reduction projects.

Priority Issue Area #6 - Water Quality

Action: Pathogens

Activity 1: Conduct studies to fill documented critical data gaps related to environmental factors that will help predict public health risk from ingesting seafood contaminated by *Vibrio vulnificus* and/or *Vibrio parahemalyticus.*

Output(s):

- Prepare a Report of Findings and present to the Alliance Water Quality Team, Pathogens Work Group. Provide workshop support and travel funding for the Water Quality State Leads, subject matter experts and other non-Federal participants, as needed.
- The *Vibrio* study results provide improved, scientifically validated information that is shared and assessable for time-critical decision making.

Outcome(s):

- The risk of exposure to disease-causing pathogens is better understood and leads to increased protection for seafood consumption .
- Coastal managers have improved understanding of specific *Vibrio*-pathogens in Gulf waters that constitute risks to human health.
- Vibrio-related deaths are significantly reduced.

Activity 2: Conduct studies to fill documented critical data gaps related to environmental factors that could help predict public health risk from wound infections resulting from exposure to coastal waters containing *Vibrio vulnificus.*

Output(s):

- Prepare a Report of Findings and present to the Alliance Water Quality Team, Pathogens Work Group and workshops as appropriate.
- Scientifically valid data are collected to fill in critical environmental data gaps. With improved information and data, prediction efforts protect public health risk from wound infections due to exposure to *Vibrio vulnificus.*

Outcome:

- *Vibrio*-related deaths and illnesses are significantly reduced.

Activity 3: Determine causes of differences in virulence among different strains of *Vibrio vulnificus*. Characterize clinical isolates for virulence factors and compare with environmental isolates from Gulf recreation and shellfish harvesting waters and seafood.

Output:

- Prepare a Report of Findings and present to the Alliance Water Quality Team, Pathogens Work Group and workshops as appropriate.

Outcome:

- Human health is better protected.

Activity 4: Evaluate the persistence of molecular targets and their relationship to viability. Conduct research to fill in and document information gaps based on a comprehensive review of literature.

Output(s):

- A reference document is created based on what is known about the persistence of molecular targets in the water column and their relationship to viability. Data gaps are identified and resolved.
- A Report of Findings is prepared and presented to the Alliance Water Quality Team, Pathogens Work Group and appropriate workshops.

Outcome(s):

- The persistence of molecular targets and their relationship to viability are better understood for conditions specific to the Gulf of Mexico.
- Molecular targets are confirmed to be either viable or non-viable

Activity 5: Assess the survivability of non-vibrio pathogens and current indicator organisms in the environment by conducting re-growth and persistence studies. Complete a literature review and evaluate results for both the water column and sediments. Conduct research to fill information gaps concerning the viability of waterborne pathogens and fecal indicators in sand and sediments.

Output(s):

- Prepare a Report of Findings and present to the Alliance Water Quality Team, Pathogens Work Group.
- The Report of Findings is shared Gulf-wide (and beyond) on the survivability of non-vibrio pathogens and indicator organisms in Gulf of Mexico water and sediment.

Outcome(s):

- The report and findings are compiled into a reference document of what is known about viability of waterborne pathogens. This information is posted on the Alliance public website and shared to interested parties.
- Valid indicators of pathogen presence and/or contamination are developed.
- Elimination of inappropriate indicator organisms.

Activity 6: Develop and conduct an epidemiological study that determines the risk to human-health by exposure to human/animal pollution sources in the Gulf of Mexico region. Identify sources and sensitive receptors. Identify and resolve data or study gaps.

Output(s):

- Prepare a Report of Findings and present to the Alliance Water Quality Team, Pathogens Work Group.
- Coastal managers are provided necessary information in order to make informed health and resource management decisions.

Outcome(s):

- A better understanding of pathogens and the risk of exposure to human health.
- Human health is better protected through risk based decisions.

Action: Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs)

Activity 1: Develop and implement projects to determine the presence and persistence of algal toxins in commercial shellfish, sediments, water and other environmental matrices. Assess toxin persistence in water and sediments.

Output:

- Prepare a Report of Findings and present to the Alliance Water Quality Team, HABs Work Group and workshops as appropriate.

Outcome(s):

- Decreased incidences of human health illnesses.
- Increased knowledge for resource managers and decision makers.

Activity 2: Develop and implement projects to identify and document the economic effects of harmful algal blooms. The project should include a comprehensive literature search to document existing methods and should identify the minimum set of data needed to document economic effects of HABs (fisheries, recreation and tourism, public health, monitoring and management).

Output:

- Prepare a Report of Findings and present to the Alliance Water Quality Team, HABs Work Group and workshops as appropriate.

Outcome(s):

- Increased ability for communities to assess the economic impact and effects from HABs.
- Better resource management decisions decrease economic impacts of HABs.

Activity 3: Conduct a project that is focused on improving the capabilities for detection of HAB cells and toxins. Develop and implement the project using novel matrix-specific and toxin-specific methods where none exist (e.g. ciguatera).

Output:

- Prepare a Report of Findings and present to the Alliance Water Quality Team, HABs Work Group and appropriate workshops.

Outcome:

- Increased ability to detect HAB cells and toxins.

Activity 4: Develop and standardize protocols for sampling ballast waters and detecting potentially invasive harmful algal bloom species in the Gulf region.

Output(s):

- Standardized protocols are developed for sampling ballast waters in order to detect potentially invasive HABs.
- Prepare a Report of Findings and present to the Alliance Water Quality Team, HABs Work Group and appropriate workshops.

Outcome:

- Prevent HAB expansion into the Gulf of Mexico.

Activity 5: Conduct a project that tests multiple methods that prevent or control HABs and/or their impacts.

Output:

- Prepare a Report of Findings and present to the Alliance Water Quality Team, HABs Work Group and appropriate workshops.

Outcome(s):

- Healthy fisheries.
- Reductions in unsightly and/or toxic blooms that affect tourism, & property value.
- Reduced spread of harmful invasive species, lowered risks to human health and the environment.
- Better information is available to resource managers and decision makers.

Action: Mercury in Seafood

Activity 1: Develop a model to be used by resource managers and decision makers to reliably predict the relationship between changing mercury loads and concentrations of methyl mercury in Gulf of Mexico seafood.

Output(s):

- A reduced-form model is developed that can run on a personal computer and be used by decision makers and resource managers to test the impacts of various mercury load reduction scenarios on methyl mercury levels in Gulf of Mexico seafood.
- Prepare a Report of Findings and present to the Alliance Water Quality Team, HABs Work Group and appropriate workshops.

Outcome(s):

- Better information is provided for resource managers and decision makers.
- Reduction of risks to human health from consuming potentially contaminated Gulf seafood.

- Reduced human health impacts to mercury intake. More efficient and consistent establishment and implementation of mercury consumption advisories Gulf-wide.

Activity 2: Develop a high-resolution model of hydrodynamic circulation in the Gulf of Mexico, coupled to a biogeochemical mercury cycling model (similar to dynamic mercury cycling models used in lakes and other freshwater ecosystems), that includes modeling of mercury cycling in estuaries and in the coastal and open waters of the Gulf. The model has to be capable of being used to predict methyl mercury levels in Gulf of Mexico seafood.

Output(s):
- Prepare a Report of Findings and present to the Alliance Water Quality Team, HABs Work Group and appropriate workshops.
- A coupled hydrodynamic/mercury water quality

Outcome:
- Reduced human health impacts to mercury intake. More efficient and consistent establishment and implementation of mercury consumption advisories Gulf-wide.

Activity 3: Conduct a baseline study to measure gradients in methyl mercury concentrations and associated production rates across one or more Gulf of Mexico estuaries. Choose estuaries that maximize existing sampling and data collection in conjunction with the Gulf of Mexico Alliance Coastal Nutrient Criteria Framework Studies. Conduct the study for at least one year with emphasis on quantifying the estuarine flushing effects from major storm events where possible.

Output:
- Prepare a Report of Findings and present to the Alliance Water Quality Team, HABs Work Group and appropriate workshops.

Outcome:
- Increased knowledge of decision makers concerning gradients in methyl mercury concentrations and associated production rates across one or more Gulf of Mexico estuaries.

Activity 4: Characterize species that might be used to establish guidance concentrations for consumption advisories Gulf-wide. This may include characterization of consumption patterns of mercury-containing biota by humans in the Gulf of Mexico.

Output(s):
- A quantitative report is presented to the Alliance Water Quality Team, Mercury Workgroup, and appropriate workshops.
- The report will provide recommendations regarding specie(s) that may be used consistently across the Gulf region in determining consumption advisories and a uniform Federal-State procedure for developing and communicating fish consumption advisories.

Outcome:

- Reduction of risks to human health from consuming potentially contaminated Gulf seafood.

Activity 5: Quantitatively measure concentrations and inputs of mercury and methyl mercury to the Gulf of Mexico from coastal and deep ocean sediments, water column methylation, and the Yucatan Channel. Quantify losses as a result of photochemical transformations, advection, and bioaccumulation at the base of the food web. Conduct the study for at least two years to examine potential seasonal/temporal differences in fluxes.

Output(s):

- A quantitative report is presented to the Alliance Water Quality Team, Mercury Workgroup, and appropriate workshops.
- A study of a consistent, science-based approach resulting in comparable data among the Gulf states for assessing mercury and methyl mercury pathways and levels that can be applied in future years. Provide critically needed data on mercury and methyl mercury fluxes, conditions for methyl mercury production, and methyl mercury bioaccumulation into estuarine food webs from a few characteristic estuarine systems for the calibration of estuarine and Gulf-wide biogeochemical mercury cycling models.

Outcome:

- Increased knowledge of seasonal mercury concentrations and fluxes.

Action: Monitoring

Activity 1: Produce a blueprint for a coordinated, Gulf-wide monitoring network to provide coastal managers with current and appropriate resource information pertaining to the waters of the Gulf region. The blueprint should: 1) allow for the development of a "Gulf-wide" Report Card that would include products from other Gulf of Mexico Alliance Water Quality Team workgroups and Priority Issue Teams; and, 2) consider the use of remote sensing for integration of parameters as appropriate in the network design. It should also include information gathered at the Annual Monitoring Forum and additional workshops that are hosted or co-hosted by the Gulf of Mexico Alliance Water Quality Team. Conduct a Gulf-wide round robin study that assesses the variability in data reported by field samplers. After individual sampling events, prepare and submit a summary of the sampling event findings to be used in refining future round robin events.

Output(s):

- Blueprint for a State of the Gulf Report that will be designed for periodic (every five years or less) updates through time.
- Complete a document stating the critical needs and uses of a comprehensive Gulf monitoring network that serves across state boundaries and that can be used by multiple Priority Issue Teams for their needs.
- A detailed report including a narrative, data, maps and steps taken to identify sources of variability in data collected during round robin studies.

Outcome(s):

- Increased knowledge of managers concerning vital information on the condition of Gulf of Mexico waters and the plants and animals living in them. The increased knowledge will help support decisions concerning coastal fisheries, recreation, tourism, public health and infrastructure planning.
- Increased cooperation, communication and collaboration by all levels of government involved in Gulf of Mexico water-quality monitoring.
- Committed partnerships are developed which build upon this experience and take forward the knowledge and skills that are learned and applied. Ecosystem health is sustained and/or improved for the betterment of the local area and the region in general.

II. Award Information

A. What is the amount of funding available?

The total estimated funding expected to be available for awards under this competitive opportunity is approximately $3,000,000.

B. Partial Funding.

In appropriate circumstances, EPA reserves the right to partially fund proposals/applications by funding discrete portions or phases of proposed projects. If EPA decides to partially fund a proposal/application, it will do so in a manner that does not prejudice any applicants or affect the basis upon which the proposal/application, or portion thereof, was evaluated and selected for award, and therefore maintains the integrity of the competition and selection process.

C. How many agreements will EPA award in the competition?

An estimated 10 to 50 projects are expected to be awarded depending on availability of funds, quality of evaluated proposals, and other applicable considerations. The estimated award range is from $50,000 to $333,000/fiscal year. In addition, EPA reserves the right to make additional awards under this announcement, consistent with Agency policy, if additional funding becomes available after the original selections. Any additional selections for awards will be made no later than six months from the date of the original selections. EPA also reserves the right to make no awards under this announcement or make fewer than anticipated.

D. What is the project period for awards resulting from this solicitation?

The estimated project period for awards resulting from this solicitation will begin in FY 2012 (October 2011 – September 2012). Proposed project periods may be up to three years.

E. Funding Type.

The funding for selected projects will be in the form of a Cooperative Agreement.

Cooperative Agreements' permit substantial involvement between the EPA Project Officer and the selected applicants in the performance of the work supported. Although EPA will negotiate precise terms and conditions relating to substantial involvement as part of the award process, the anticipated substantial Federal involvement for this project will be:

- close monitoring of the successful applicant's performance to verify the results proposed by the applicant;
- collaboration during performance of the scope of work;
- in accordance with 40 CFR 30.44(e) or 31.36(g), as appropriate, review of proposed procurements;
- reviewing qualifications of key personnel (EPA will not select employees or contractors employed by the award recipient);
- review and comment on the content of printed or electronic publications prepared under the cooperative agreement.

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Entities

In accordance with CFDA 66.475, proposals will be accepted from states, local governments, territories, Indian tribes, public and private universities and colleges, and other public or non-profit institutions.

A non-profit organization, as defined by OMB Circular A-122, located at 2 CFR Part 230, means any corporation, trust, association, cooperative or other organization that: (1) is operated primarily for scientific, educational, service, charitable or similar purposes in the public interest; (2) is not organized primarily for profit; and (3) uses its net proceeds to maintain, improve and/or expand its operations. Note that OMB Circular A-122 excludes the following types of organizations from the definition of "non-profit organization" because they are covered in other Circulars: (i) colleges and universities covered by 2 CFR Part 220, OMB Circular A-21; (ii) state, local and federally-recognized Indian tribal governments covered by 2 CFR Part 225, OMB Circular A-87.

For-profit organizations are not an eligible entity for this funding opportunity. Additionally, non-profit organizations described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying activities as defined in Section 3 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 are not eligible to apply.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

No matching funds are required under this competition. Although cost-sharing/matching is not required as a condition of eligibility under this competition, under Section V of this announcement EPA will evaluate proposals based on a leveraging criterion.

Leveraging is generally when an applicant proposes to provide its own additional funds/resources

or those from third party sources to support or complement the project they are awarded under the competition which are above and beyond the EPA grant funds awarded. Any leveraged funds/resources, and their source, must be identified in the proposal (See Section IV of the announcement). Leveraged funds and resources may take various forms as noted below.

Voluntary Cost Share is a form of leveraging. Voluntary cost sharing is when an applicant voluntarily proposes to legally commit to provide costs or contributions to support the project when a cost share is not required. Applicants who propose to use a voluntary cost share **must** include the costs or contributions for the voluntary cost share in the project budget on the SF-424. If an applicant proposes a voluntary cost share, the following apply:

- A voluntary cost share is subject to the match provisions in the grant regulations (40 CFR 30.23 or 40 CFR 31.24, as applicable).
- A voluntary cost share may only be met with eligible and allowable costs.
- The recipient may not use other sources of federal funds to meet a voluntary cost share unless the statue authorizing the other federal funding provides that the federal funds may be used to meet a cost share requirement on a federal grant.
- The recipient is legally obligated to meet any proposed voluntary cost share that is included in the approved project budget. If the proposed voluntary cost share does not materialize during grant performance, then EPA may reconsider the legitimacy of the award and/or take other appropriate action as authorized by 40 CFR Parts 30 or 31 as applicable.

Other leveraged funding/resources that are not identified as a voluntary cost share – this form of leveraging may be met by funding from another federal grant, from an applicant's own resources, or resources from other third party sources. This form of leveraging should not be included in the budget and the costs need not be eligible and allowable project costs under the EPA assistance agreement. While this form of leveraging should not be included in the budget, the grant work plan should include a statement indicating that the applicant is expected to produce the proposed leveraging consistent with the terms of the announcement and the applicant's proposal. If applicants propose to provide this form of leveraging, EPA expects them to make the effort to secure the leveraged resources described in their proposals. If the proposed leveraging does not materialize during grant performance, then EPA may reconsider the legitimacy of the award and/or take other appropriate action as authorized by 40 CFR Parts 30 or 31 as applicable.

C. Threshold Eligibility Criteria

These are requirements that if not met by the time of proposal submission will result in elimination of the proposal from consideration for funding. Only proposals from eligible entities (see above) that meet all of these criteria will be evaluated against the ranking factors in Section V of this announcement. Applicants deemed ineligible for funding consideration as a result of the threshold eligibility review will be notified within 15 calendar days of the ineligibility determination.

1. a. Proposals must substantially comply with the proposal submission instructions and requirements set forth in Section IV of this announcement or else they will be rejected. However, where a page limit is expressed in Section IV with respect to the narrative proposal, pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed.

   b. In addition, proposals must be received by the EPA through www.grants.gov or by hard copy as specified in Section IV of this announcement on or before the proposal submission deadline published in Section IV of this announcement. Applicants are responsible for ensuring that their proposal reaches the designated person/office specified in Section IV by the submission deadline.

   c. Proposals received after the submission deadline will be considered late and returned to the sender without further consideration unless the applicant can clearly demonstrate that it was late due to EPA mishandling. For hard copy or electronic submittals, where Section IV requires proposal receipt to a specific person/office by the submission deadline, receipt by an agency mailroom is not sufficient. Applicants should confirm receipt of their proposal with the Agency Contact, Gerry Martin, martin.gerry@epa.gov as soon as possible after the submission deadline — failure to do so may result in your proposal not being reviewed.

   d. While Applicants may submit multiple proposals under this announcement, each proposal must be for a separate Priority Issue Area. Proposals addressing more than one Priority Issue Area will be determined "ineligible" in accordance with **Section III, Eligibility Information**, and rejected.

2. Proposals must support EPA Strategic Plan Goal 2: Protecting America's Waters, Objective 2.2: Protect and Restore Watersheds and Aquatic Ecosystems; or Goal 4: Healthy Communities and Ecosystems, Objective 3: Protect, sustain and restore the health of critical natural habitats and ecosystems.

3. Proposed projects must be consistent with the Clean Water Act 104(b)(3) authority. All proposals submitted will be reviewed for eligibility under Section 104 (b)(3) of the Clean Water Act (CWA). Water Quality Cooperative Agreements are authorized under this statutory authority to conduct and promote the coordination and acceleration of research, investigations, experiments, training, demonstrations, extent, prevention, reduction, and elimination of pollution. The term "pollution" means the man-made or man-induced alteration of the chemical, physical, biological, and radiological integrity of water surveys, and studies relating to the causes, effects.

   Projects that implement 'Best Management Practices' or any type of construction activities must qualify as a demonstration project under CWA § 104(b)(3). A demonstration project must involve new or experimental technologies, methods, or approaches, where the results of the project will be disseminated so that others can benefit from the knowledge gained in the demonstration project. A project that is accomplished through the performance of routine, traditional, or established practices,

or a project that is simply intended to carry out a task rather than transfer information or advance the state of knowledge is not a demonstration.

4. Ineligible Activities. Applicants must adhere closely to the types of projects authorized for funding under CWA § 104 (b)(3) in developing proposals. Unauthorized project types will be disqualified. Types of projects that are ineligible for funding are routine construction projects, except to a limited degree to demonstrate innovation, prevention, or removal of pollution; land acquisition; or projects that are largely general education/outreach or conferences unless they meet a clear need to accomplish a public purpose and are not for the direct benefit of EPA.

IV. Proposal and Submission Information

A. How to Obtain a Proposal Package

Applicants can download individual grant application forms from EPA's Office of Grants and Debarment website at: http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/application.htm .

B. Mode of Proposal Submission

Proposals must be received by the Agency Contact by hard copy through the mail or commercial delivery service or through electronic submission to http://www.grants.gov. All required documents listed in Section IV of this announcement must be attached to the electronic submission as separate Adobe PDF files. All proposals received after the closing date and time will not be considered for funding.

The address for hard copy submission is:

EPA/Gulf of Mexico Program Office
ATTN: Gerry Martin
Mail Code: EPA/GMPO
Building 1100, Room 232
Stennis Space Center, MS 39529

Grants.gov Submission (see Appendix A, Grants.gov Submission Instructions) Proposal Submission Deadline. Applicants who submit proposals through electronic submission must be submitted by the organization's authorized official representative (AOR) to Grants.gov (http://www.grants.gov) no later than 5:00 p.m. Central Standard Time on the closing date. All electronic proposals received after the closing date and time will not be considered for funding.

C. Content of Proposal Submission

The proposal package ***must*** include all the following materials:

- **Standard Form (SF) 424, Application for Federal Assistance**

Complete the form (available at http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/application.htm). There are no attachments. Please be sure to include organization fax number and email address in Block 5 of the Standard Form SF 424.

Please note that the organizational Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number must be included on the SF-424. Organizations may obtain a DUNS number at no cost by calling the toll-free DUNS number request line at 1-866-705-5711.

- **Standard Form (SF) 424A, Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs**

Complete the form (available at http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/application.htm
There are no attachments. The total amount of federal funding requested for the project period should be shown on line 5(e) and on line 6(k) of SF-424A, the amount of indirect costs should be entered on line 6(j). The indirect cost rate (i.e., a percentage), the base (e.g., personnel costs and fringe benefits), and the amount should also be indicated on line 22.

- **Narrative Proposal**

The Narrative Proposal (sections 1-3 below) cannot exceed a maximum of 20 typewritten pages. If the Narrative Proposal exceeds 20 pages, only the first 20 pages will be reviewed and scored. The pages should be letter size (8 ½ X 11 inches), with normal type size (10 or 12 characters per inch), and at least 1" margins. Double-sided pages count as two pages.

Supporting materials such as Resumes and Letters of Support are not included in the 20-page limit and can be submitted as attachments. Do not use spiral binding, separation tabs or plastic covers. You may bind your paperwork with a staple. Do not include videos or DVDs.

1. **Summary Information Page** (recommended not to exceed one page)
   a. Project Title
   b. Applicant Information. Include applicant (organization) name, address, contact person, phone number, fax and e-mail address.
   c. Funding Requested. Specify the amount you are requesting from EPA.
   d. Total Project Cost. Specify total cost of the project. Identify funding from other sources, including cost share or in-kind resources.
   e. Project period. Provide beginning and ending dates. (Projects are anticipated to begin date and end no later than date.)
   f. DUNS number-See Section VI.C.

2. Narrative Proposal Work Plan

The Narrative/Work Plan must include the information listed below. If a particular

item is not applicable, clearly state this in the proposal. The Narrative/Work Plan must explicitly describe how the proposed project meets the guidelines in Sections I-III of the announcement (including the threshold eligibility criteria in Section III.B) and must address each of the evaluation criteria set forth in **Section V, Application Review Information**.

The applicant should clearly identify which activities they are addressing under one of the Priority Issue Areas: Water Quality, Habitat Conservation and Restoration, Ecosystems Integration and Assessment, Nutrient Reduction, Environmental Education, and Coastal Community Resilience. Remember, the applicant must submit a separate proposal for each priority issue area activity for which you are applying.

a. **Project Summary/Approach**: The summary shall contain the following components:

i. Detailed project summary, description of specific actions and methods to be undertaken and the responsible institutions, including estimated time line for each task.
ii. Description of the associated work products to be developed.
iii. Explanation of project benefits to the public, and specifically the potential audience(s) served.
iv. Description of the roles of the applicant and partners, if any.
v. Description of the applicant's organization and experience related to the proposed project.
vi. Description of staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project.
vii. Budget and estimated funding amounts for each work component/task.
viii. Discussion of how the project promotes Environmental Justice concerns (see Section I.C.).

***Selected applicant(s) will need to submit a copy of their current indirect cost rate that has been negotiated with a federal cognizant agency prior to award.**

b. Environmental Results—Outcomes, Outputs and Performance Measures

Identify the expected quantitative and qualitative outcomes and outputs of the project **(See Section I)**, including what performance measurements or other means will be used to track and measure your progress towards achieving the expected outcomes and outputs and how the results of the project will be evaluated.

c. Programmatic Capability and Past Performance

Submit a list of federally funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include Federal grants and cooperative agreements but not Federal contracts) similar in size, scope and relevance to the proposed project that your organization performed within the last three years (no more than 5 agreements, and preferably EPA agreements) and describe (i) whether,

and how, you were able to successfully complete and manage those agreements and (ii) your history of meeting the reporting requirements under those agreements including whether you adequately and timely reported on your progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes of those agreements (and if not, explain why not) and whether you submitted acceptable final technical reports under the agreements. In evaluating applicants under these factors in Section V, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources, including information from EPA files and from current/prior grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information provided by the applicant).

d. Voluntary cost share/match and other leveraged funds (See Section III.B)

Demonstrate how you will leverage additional funds/resources beyond the grant funds awarded to support the proposed project activities and how these funds/resources will be used to contribute to the performance and success of the proposed project. This includes but is not limited to funds and other resources leveraged from businesses, labor organizations, non-profit organizations, education and training providers, and/or Federal, state, tribal, and local governments, as appropriate. Describe the amount and type of leveraged resources to be provided, how you will obtain the leveraged resources, the likelihood the leveraging will materialize during grant performance, the strength of the leveraging commitment, and the role the leveraged resources will play to support the proposed project activities. Selected applicants are expected to abide by their proposed leveraging commitments during grant performance and the failure to do so may affect the legitimacy of the award.

3. Detailed Budget Narrative (See Appendix B, Budget Sample)

Clearly explain how EPA funds will be used. This section provides an opportunity for a narrative description of the budget found in the SF-424A. Applicants must itemize costs related to personnel, fringe benefits, contractual costs, travel, equipment, supplies, other direct costs, indirect costs, and total costs.

Management Fees: When formulating budgets for proposals, applicants must not include management fees or similar charges in excess of the direct costs and indirect costs at the rate approved by the applicants cognizant audit agency, or at the rate provided for by the terms of the agreement negotiated with EPA. The term "management fees or similar charges" refers to expenses added to the direct costs in order to accumulate and reserve funds for ongoing business expenses, unforeseen liabilities, or for other similar costs that is not allowable under EPA assistance agreements. Management fees or similar charges may not be used to improve or expand the project funded under this agreement, except to the extent authorized as a direct cost of carrying out the scope of work.

4. *(OPTIONAL)* Attachments. These are optional and are not included in the 20-page limit. Nor are these attachments considered during evaluation of an applicant's proposal.

> **a. Biographical Sketch.** Provide resumes or curriculum vitae for all principal investigators and any other key personnel.

b. Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement.
c. **Quality Assurance Narrative Statement.**
d. Support Letters-These should indicate how the supporting organization will assist in the project.

D. Can funding be used for the applicant to make subawards acquire contract services or fund partnerships?

EPA awards funds to one eligible applicant as the recipient even if other eligible applicants are named as partners or co-applicants or members of a coalition or consortium. The recipient is accountable to EPA for the proper expenditure of funds.

Funding may be used to provide subgrants or subawards of financial assistance, which includes using subawards or subgrants to fund partnerships, provided the recipient complies with applicable requirements for subawards or subgrants including those contained in 40 CFR Parts 30 or 31, as appropriate. Applicants must compete contracts for services and products, including consultant contracts, and conduct cost and price analyses to the extent required by the procurement provisions of the regulations at 40 CFR Parts 30 or 31, as appropriate. The regulations also contain limitations on consultant compensation. Applicants are not required to identify subawardees/subgrantees and/or contractors (including consultants) in their proposal. However, if they do, the fact that an applicant selected for award has named a specific subawardee/subgrantee, contractor, or consultant in the proposal EPA selects for funding does not relieve the applicant of its obligations to comply with subaward/subgrant and/or competitive procurement requirements as appropriate. Please note that applicants may not award sole source contracts to consulting, engineering or other firms assisting applicants with the proposal solely based on the firm's role in preparing the proposal.

Successful applicants cannot use subgrants or subawards to avoid requirements in EPA grant regulations for competitive procurement by using these instruments to acquire commercial services or products from for-profit organizations to carry out its assistance agreement. The nature of the transaction between the recipient and the subawardee or subgrantee must be consistent with the standards for distinguishing between vendor transactions and subrecipient assistance under Subpart B Section .210 of OMB Circular A-133 , and the definitions of subaward at 40 CFR 30.2(ff) or subgrant at 40 CFR 31.3, as applicable. EPA will not be a party to these transactions. Applicants acquiring commercial goods or services must comply with the competitive procurement standards in 40 CFR Part 30 or 40 CFR Part 31.36 and cannot use a subaward/subgrant as the funding mechanism.

E. How will an applicant's proposed subawardees/subgrantees and contractors be considered during the evaluation process described in Section V of the announcement?

Section V of the announcement describes the evaluation criteria and evaluation process that will be used by EPA to make selections under this announcement. During this evaluation, except for those criteria that relate to the applicant's own qualifications, past performance,

and reporting history, the review panel will consider, if appropriate and relevant, the qualifications, expertise, and experience of:

(i) an applicant's named subawardees/subgrantees identified in the proposal if the applicant demonstrates in the proposal that if it receives an award that the subaward/subgrant will be properly awarded consistent with the applicable regulations in 40 CFR Parts 30 or 31. For example, applicants must not use subawards/subgrants to obtain commercial services or products from for profit firms or individual consultants.

(ii) an applicant's named contractor(s), including consultants, identified in the proposal if the applicant demonstrates in its proposal that the contractor(s) was selected in compliance with the competitive Procurement Standards in 40 CFR Part 30 or 40 CFR 31.36 as appropriate. For example, an applicant must demonstrate that it selected the contractor(s) competitively or that a proper noncompetitive sole-source award consistent with the regulations will be made to the contractor(s), that efforts were made to provide small and disadvantaged businesses with opportunities to compete, and that some form of cost or price analysis was conducted. EPA may not accept sole source justifications for contracts for services or products that are otherwise readily available in the commercial marketplace. EPA will not consider the qualifications, experience, and expertise of named subawardees/subgrantees and/or named contractor(s) during the proposal evaluation process unless the applicant complies with these requirements.

F. Submission Dates and Times

The closing date and time for receipt of proposal submissions is Friday, September 30, 2011, no later than 5:00 p.m. Central Standard Time (CST). Proposals must be received by the Agency Contact by hard copy through the mail or commercial delivery service or through electronic submission to Grants.gov at http://www.grants.gov. All proposals received after the closing date and time will not be considered for funding.

Grants.gov Submission (see Appendix A, Grants.gov Submission Instructions) Proposal Submission Deadline. Applicants who submit proposals through electronic submission must be submitted by that organization's authorized official representative (AOR) to Grants.gov (http://www.grants.gov) no later than 5:00 p.m. Central Standard Time on the closing date. All electronic proposals received after the closing date and time will not be considered for funding.

G. Confidential Business Information

In accordance with 40 CFR 2.203, applicants may claim all or a portion of their proposal as confidential business information. EPA will evaluate confidentiality claims in accordance with 40 CFR Part 2. Applicants must clearly mark proposals or portions of proposals they claim as confidential. If no claim of confidentiality is made, EPA is not required to make the inquiry to the applicant otherwise required by 40 CFR 2.204(c) (2) prior to disclosure.

However, the agency considers competitive proposals confidential and protected from disclosure prior to the completion of the competitive selection process.

H. Pre-Application Assistance and Communications

In accordance with EPA's Assistance Agreement Competition Policy (EPA Order 5700.5A1), EPA staff will not meet with individual applicants to discuss draft proposal packages, provide informal comments on draft narrative proposals, or provide advice and/or guidance to applicants on how to respond to ranking criterion. Applicants are responsible for the contents of their proposals. However, EPA will respond to questions in writing from individual applicants regarding threshold eligibility criterion, administrative issues related to the submission of the proposal, and requests for clarification about the announcement.

V. Application Review Information

A. Evaluation Criteria

Only eligible entities whose proposals meet the Threshold Eligibility Criteria in Section III of this announcement will be evaluated according to the criteria set forth below. Applicants should directly and explicitly address these criteria as part of their proposal submittal. If the Narrative Proposal Work Plan exceeds the 20-page limit (see Section IV.C), the Review Panel will not consider any information past the 20th page; and, accordingly, a score of "zero" will be recorded for all affected evaluation criteria. Each Proposal will be rated under a points system with a total of 100 points possible.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	Score
1. Relevance/Rationale (25 points) Under this criterion, the Agency will evaluate the extent and quality to which the narrative proposal meets the goals and objectives of the Gulf of Mexico Program Office and whether the narrative proposal sets forth a reasonable time schedule for the execution of the tasks associated with project and for achieving one or more of the project goals and objectives by project end. Project tasks must make substantial progress toward improving the health of the Gulf of Mexico.	(25 points)
2. Environmental Results – Measurable Outputs and Outcomes (25 points) Under this criterion, the Agency will evaluate the effectiveness of the applicant's plan for tracking and measuring its progress toward achieving the expected project outputs and outcomes, including those identified in **Section I** of this announcement.	(25 points)

3. Leveraging (10 points) Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on the extent they demonstrate that they will leverage additional funds/ resources, beyond the grant funds awarded, to support the proposed project activities and how these funds/resources will be used to contribute to the performance and success of the proposed project. This includes but is not limited to funds and other resources leveraged from businesses, labor organizations, non-profit organizations, education and training providers, and/or Federal, state, tribal, and local governments, as appropriate. Applicants will also be evaluated based on the amount and type of leveraged resources to be provided, how they will obtain the leveraged resources, the likelihood the leveraging will materialize during grant performance, the strength of the leveraging commitment, and the role the leveraged funds/resources will play to support the proposed project activities.	(10 points)
4. Technical/Scientific Merit: (10 points) Under this criterion, the Proposal will be evaluated based on the extent that it has provided sufficient details to document that the project is technically sound and/or innovative. The proposed methods, approaches and concepts are clearly described along with measureable outputs and outcomes.	(10 points)
5. Budget (10 points) Under this criterion, the Agency will evaluate the proposed project budget to determine whether, **I. (5 pts)** costs are reasonable to accomplish the proposed goals, objectives, and measurable environmental outcomes, **II. (5 pts)** the proposed budget provides a detailed breakout of the approximate funding used for each major activity. An applicant's budget and budget narrative must account for both federal funds and any non-federal funds (e.g., any required or voluntary cost share/match if applicable). Applicants must precisely describe in their budget narrative how they will account for any required or voluntary cost share/match and what role EPA funding will play in the overall project.	(10 points)

6. Programmatic Capability and Past Performance (20 points) Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on their ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project taking into account their: **I. (5 pts)** past performance in successfully completing and managing the assistance agreements identified in the narrative proposal as described in Section IV.C of the announcement, **II. (5 pts)** history of meeting the reporting requirements under the assistance agreements identified in the narrative proposal as described in Section IV.C of the announcement including whether the applicant submitted acceptable final technical reports under those agreements and the extent to which the applicant adequately and timely reported on their progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes under those agreements and if such progress was not being made whether the applicant adequately reported why not, **III. (5pts)** organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project, **IV. (5 pts)** staff expertise and qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project. **Note:** In evaluating applicants under items I and II of this criterion, the Agency will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources including agency files and prior/current grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information supplied by the applicant). If you do not have any relevant or available past performance or reporting information, please indicate this in the proposal and you will receive a neutral score for these sub-factors (items I and II above-a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible points). If you do not provide any response for these items, you may receive a score of 0 for these factors.	(20 points)
TOTAL SCORE: Possible score = 100	

B. Review and Selection Process

Proposals will first be evaluated against the threshold factors listed in Section III. Only those proposals which meet all of the threshold factors will be evaluated using the evaluation criteria listed above by an EPA evaluation team. Each proposal will be given a numerical score and will be rank-ordered according to the numerical score. Preliminary funding recommendations will be provided to the Approving Official based on this ranking.

C. Other Factors

Final funding decisions will be made by the Approving Official based on the rankings and

preliminary recommendations of the EPA evaluation team. In making the final funding decisions, the Approving Official may also consider programmatic priorities and geographic diversity of funds. Once final decisions have been made, a funding recommendation will be developed and forwarded to the EPA Award Official.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

Following evaluation of proposals, all applicants will be notified regarding their status.

a. EPA anticipates notification to the *successful* applicant will be made via telephone, email or postal mail. The notification will advise the applicant that its proposed project has been successfully evaluated and recommended for award. The notification will be sent to the original signer of the Standard Form (SF) 424, Proposal for Federal Assistance. This notification, which advises that the applicant's proposed project has been recommended for award, is **not** an authorization to begin performance. The award notice signed by the EPA grants officer is the authorizing document and will be provided through postal mail. At a minimum, this process can take up to 90 days from the date of recommendation.

b. EPA anticipates notification to *unsuccessful* applicant(s) will be made via email or postal mail. The notification will be sent to the original signer of the Standard Form (SF) 424, Proposal for Federal Assistance.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirement

A listing and description of general EPA Regulations applicable to the award of assistance agreements may be viewed at:
http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/applicable_epa_regulations_and_description.htm.

Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs, may be applicable to awards resulting from this announcement. Applicants selected for funding may be required to provide a copy of their application to their State Point of Contact (SPOC) for review, pursuant to Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs. This review is not required with the Initial Application and not all states require such a review. A listing of State Point of Contacts (SPOC) may be viewed at:
www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/spoc.html

C. Central Contractor Registration (CCR) and Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Requirements

Unless exempt from these requirements under OMB guidance at 2 CFR Part 25 (e.g., individuals), applicants must:

1. Be registered in the CCR prior to submitting an application or proposal under this announcement. CCR information can be found at https://www.bpn.gov/ccr/

2. Maintain an active CCR registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or proposal under consideration by an agency, and

3. Provide its DUNS number in each application or proposal it submits to the agency. Applicants can receive a DUNS number, at no cost, by calling the dedicated toll-free DUNS Number request line at 1-866-705-5711, or visiting the D&B website at: http://www.dnb.com.

If an applicant fails to comply with these requirements, it will, should it be selected for award, affect their ability to receive the award.

D. Reporting Requirement

Quarterly progress reports and a detailed final technical report will be required. Quarterly reports summarizing technical progress, planned activities for the next quarter and a summary of expenditures are required. The final technical report shall be completed within 90 calendar days of the completion of the period of performance. The final technical report should include: summary of the project or activity, advances achieved, and costs of the project or activity. In addition, the final technical report should discuss the problems, successes, and lessons learned from the project or activity that could help overcome structural, organizational or technical obstacles to implementing a similar project elsewhere. The schedule for submission of quarterly reports will be established by EPA, after award. Lastly, if incremental funding is applicable, annual reports will be required. The content of the annual report is similar to the final technical report.

E. Exchange Network

EPA, states, territories, and tribes are working together to develop the National Environmental Information Exchange Network, a secure, Internet- and standards-based way to support electronic data reporting, sharing, and integration of both regulatory and non-regulatory environmental data. States, tribes and territories exchanging data with each other or with EPA, should make the Exchange Network and the Agency's connection to it, the Central Data Exchange (CDX), the standard way they exchange data and should phase out any legacy methods they have been using. More information on the Exchange Network is available at www.exchangenetwork.net.

F. Disputes

Assistance agreement competition-related disputes will be resolved in accordance with the dispute resolution procedures published in 70 FR (Federal Register) 3629, 3630 (January 26, 2005) which can be found at http://www.epa.gov/ogd/competition/resolution.htm. Copies of

these procedures may also be requested by contacting the Agency representative identified in Section VII of this solicitation.

G. Non-profit Administrative Capability

Non-profit applicants that are recommended for funding under this announcement are subject to pre-award administrative capability reviews consistent with Section 8b, 8c and 9d of EPA Order 5700.8 - Policy on Assessing Capabilities of Non-Profit Applicants for Managing Assistance Awards (http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/award/5700_8.pdf). In addition, non-profit applicants that qualify for funding may, depending on the size of the award, be required to fill out and submit to the Grants Management Office the Administrative Capabilities Form, with supporting documents, contained in Appendix A of EPA Order 5700.8.

H. Subaward and Executive Compensation Reporting

Applicants must ensure that they have the necessary processes and systems in place to comply with the sub-award and executive total compensation reporting requirements established under OMB guidance at 2 CFR Part 170, unless they qualify for an exception from the requirements, should they be selected for funding.

I. Use of Grant Funds

An applicant that receives an award under this announcement is expected to manage assistance agreement funds efficiently and effectively and make sufficient progress towards completing the project activities described in the work-plan in a timely manner. The assistance agreement will include terms/conditions implementing this requirement.

VII. Agency Contact

For Further Information Contact:
Gerry Martin, EPA/Gulf of Mexico Program Office
martin.gerry@epa.gov
Phone: 228-688-1281

VIII. Other Information (Appendices)

Quality Assurance/Quality Control

Quality Assurance /Quality Control requirements may be applicable to these grants (see 40 CFR 30.54 and 40 CFR 31.45). QA/QC requirements apply to the collection of environmental data. Environmental data are any measurements or information that describe environmental processes, location, or conditions; ecological or health effects and consequences; or the performance of environmental technology. Environmental data include

information collected directly from measurements, produced from models, and compiled from other sources such as databases or literature. Applicants should allow sufficient time and resources for this process. EPA can assist applicants in determining whether QA/QC is required for the proposed project.

Copyrights

EPA reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable license to reproduce, publish or otherwise use, and to authorize others to use, for Federal Government purposes in accordance with 40 CFR 31.34: (a) the copyright in any work developed under a grant, subgrant, or contract under a grant or subgrant; and (b) any rights of copyright to which a grantee, subgrantee or a contractor purchases ownership with grant support.

Geospatial Information

Grants awarded under this announcement may involve Geospatial Information. Geospatial data generally means information that identifies, depicts, or describes the geographic locations, boundaries, or characteristics of inhabitants and natural or constructed features on the Earth. This includes such information derived from, among other sources, socio-demographic analysis, economic analysis, land information records and land use information processing, statistical analysis, survey and observational methodologies, environmental analysis, critical infrastructure protection, satellites, remote sensing, airborne imagery collection, mapping, engineering, construction, global positioning systems, and surveying technologies and activities. It also includes individual point or site-specific data that are referenced to a location on the Earth and digital aerial imagery of the Earth.

This information may be derived from, among other things, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Global Positioning Systems (GPS), remote sensing, mapping, charting, and surveying technologies, or statistical data. For purposes of EPA grants, this refers to geographically based information or data or the tools, applications or hardware that allow one to collect, manage, analyze, store, or distribute data in a geographic manner.

Data Sharing

All recipients of these assistance agreements will be required to share any data generated through this funding agreement as a defined deliverable in the final work plan.

Appendix A. Grants.gov Submission Instructions

Grants.gov Instructions

The electronic submission of your proposal must be made by an authorized official representative (AOR) of your institution who is registered with Grants.gov and is authorized to sign grant proposals for Federal assistance. For more information, go to http://www.grants.gov and click on "Get Registered" on the left side of the page. *Note that the registration process may take a week or longer to complete.* If your organization is not currently registered with Grants.gov, please encourage them to designate an AOR and ask that individual to begin the registration process as soon as possible.

To begin the proposal process under this grant announcement, go to http://www.grants.gov and click on the "Apply for Grants" tab on the left side of the page. Then click on "Apply Step 1: Download a Grant Application Package" to download the compatible Adobe viewer and obtain the application package. **To apply through grants.gov you must use Adobe Reader applications and download the compatible Adobe Reader version (Adobe Reader applications are available to download for free on the Grants.gov website. For more information on Adobe Reader please visit the Help section on grants.gov at** http://www.grants.gov/help/help.jsp or http://www.grants.gov/aboutgrants/program_status.jsp).

Once you have downloaded the viewer, you may retrieve the application package by entering the Funding Opportunity Number, EPA-GM-2011-1, or the CFDA number that applies to the announcement (CFDA 66.475), in the appropriate field. You may also be able to access the proposal package by clicking on the Application button at the top right of the synopsis page for this announcement on http://www.grants.gov (to find the synopsis page, go to http://www.grants.gov and click on the "Find Grant Opportunities" button on the left side of the page and then go to Search Opportunities and use the Browse by Agency feature to find EPA opportunities).

Proposal Submission Deadline: Your organization's AOR must submit your complete proposal package electronically to EPA through Grants.gov (http://www.grants.gov) no later than Friday, September 30, 2011, 5:00 p.m. CST.

Please submit *all* of the proposal materials described below.

Proposal Materials

The following forms and documents are required to be submitted under this announcement:

I. Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
II. Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)
III. Narrative Proposal-prepared as described in Section IV.C of the RFP

IV. Other Attachments Form for other optional documents-See Section IV.C of the RFP:

a. Biographical Sketch. Provide resumes or curriculum vitae for all principal investigators and any other key personnel.

b. Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement.

c. **Quality Assurance Narrative Statement.**

d. Support Letters-These should indicate how the supporting organization will assist in the project.

The proposal package *must* include all of the following materials:

I. Standard Form (SF) 424, Application for Federal Assistance
Complete the form. There are no attachments. Please be sure to include organization fax number and email address in Block 5 of the Standard Form SF 424.

Please note that the organizational Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number must be included on the SF-424. Organizations may obtain a DUNS number at no cost by calling the toll-free DUNS number request line at 1-866-705-5711.

II. Standard Form SF 424A – Budget Information:
Complete the form. There are no attachments. The total amount of federal funding requested for the project period should be shown on line 5(e) and on line 6(k) of SF-424A. If indirect costs are included, the amount of indirect costs should be entered on line 6(j). The indirect cost rate (i.e., a percentage), the base (e.g., personnel costs and fringe benefits), and the amount should also be indicated on line 22.

III. Narrative Proposal
Prepared as described in Section IV.C of the announcement. The document should be readable in PDF format and consolidated into a single file and not exceed a total of (20) pages.

IV. Other Attachments Form-other optional documents (See above)

Application Preparation and Submission Instructions

Documents I through III listed under Proposal Materials above should appear in the "Mandatory Documents" box on the Grants.gov Grant Application Package page.

For documents I and II, click on the appropriate form and then click "Open Form" below the box. The fields that must be completed will be highlighted in yellow. Optional fields and completed fields will be displayed in white. If you enter an invalid response or incomplete information in a field, you will receive an error message. When you have finished filling out each form, click "Save." When you return to the electronic Grant Application Package page, click on the form you just completed, and then click on the box that says, "Move Form to Submission List." This action will move the document over to the box that says, "Mandatory Completed Documents for Submission."

For document III, you will need to attach electronic files. Prepare your narrative proposal as described in Section IV.C of the announcement and save the document to your computer as a PDF file. When you are ready to attach your proposal to the application package, click on "Project Narrative Attachment Form," and open the form. Click "Add Mandatory Project Narrative File," and then attach your proposal (previously saved to your computer) using the browse window that appears. You may then click "View Mandatory Project Narrative File" to view it. Enter a brief descriptive title of your project in the space beside "Mandatory Project Narrative File Filename;" the filename should be no more than 40 characters long. If there are other attachments that you would like to submit to accompany your proposal (optional documents described above), you may click "Add Optional Project Narrative File" and proceed as before or use the Other Attachments Form. When you have finished attaching the necessary documents, click "Close Form." When you return to the "Grant Application Package" page, select the "Project Narrative Attachment Form" and click "Move Form to Submission List." The form should now appear in the box that says, "Mandatory Completed Documents for Submission."

Once you have finished filling out all of the forms/attachments and they appear in one of the "Completed Documents for Submission" boxes, click the "Save" button that appears at the top of the Web page. It is suggested that you save the document a second time, using a different name, since this will make it easier to submit an amended package later if necessary. Please use the following format when saving your file: "Applicant Name – FY11 – Assoc Prog Supp – 1st Submission" or "Applicant Name – FY 11 Assoc Prog Supp – Back-up Submission." If it becomes necessary to submit an amended package at a later date, then the name of the 2nd submission should be changed to "Applicant Name – FY11 Assoc Prog Supp – 2nd Submission."

Once your proposal package has been completed and saved, send it to your AOR for submission to U.S. EPA through Grants.gov. Please advise your AOR to close all other software programs before attempting to submit the proposal package through Grants.gov. In the "Application Filing Name" box, your AOR should enter your organization's name (abbreviate where possible), the fiscal year (e.g., FY11), and the grant category (e.g., Assoc Prog Supp). The filing name should not exceed 40 characters. From the "Grant Application Package" page, your AOR may submit the application package by clicking the "Submit" button that appears at the top of the page. The AOR will then be asked to verify the agency and funding opportunity number for which the application package is being submitted. If problems are encountered during the submission process, the AOR should reboot his/her computer before trying to submit the proposal package again. [It may be necessary to turn off the computer (not just restart it) before attempting to submit the package again.] If the AOR continues to experience submission problems, he/she may contact Grants.gov for assistance by phone at 1-800-518-4726 or email at http://www.grants.gov/help/help.jsp . Proposal packages submitted thru grants.gov will be time/date stamped electronically.

Appendix B. Budget Sample

Budget Detail

This section of the work plan is a detailed description of the budget found in the SF-424A, and must include a detailed discussion of how EPA funds will be used. Applicants must **itemize** costs related to personnel, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, contractual costs, other direct costs, indirect costs, and total costs.

If the project budget includes any cost-share, mandatory or voluntary, the Budget Detail portion of the narrative proposal must include a detailed description of how the applicant will obtain the cost-share and how the cost-share funding will be used. If EPA accepts an offer for a voluntary cost-share, applicants must meet their sharing commitment as a legal condition of receiving EPA funding. If the proposed cost-share is to be provided by a third-party, a letter of commitment is required. Any form of cost-share included in the Budget Detail must also be include on the SF 424 and SF 424A. Please see Section III.B if this RFP for more detailed information on cost-share.

Applicants should use the following instructions, budget object class descriptions, and example table to complete the Budget Detail section of the work plan.

Personnel - List all staff positions by title. Give annual salary, percentage of time assigned to the project, and total cost for the budget period. This category includes only direct costs for the salaries of those individuals who will perform work directly for the project (generally, paid employees of the applicant organization). If the applicant organization is including staff time (in-kind services) as a cost share, this should be included as Personnel costs. Personnel costs do not include: (1) costs for services of consultants, contractors, consortia members, or other partner organizations, which are included in the "Contractual" category; (2) costs for employees of subrecipients under subawards, which are included in the "Other" category; or (3) effort that is nor directly in support of the proposed project, which may be covered by the organization's negotiated indirect cost rate. The budget detail must identify the personnel category type by Full Time Equivalent (FTE), including percentage of FTE for part-time employees, number of personnel proposed for each category, and the estimated funding amounts.

 Fringe Benefits - Identify the percentage used, the basis for its computation, and the types of benefits included. Fringe benefits are allowances and services provided by employers to their employees as compensation in addition to regular salaries and wages. Fringe benefits include, but are not limited to the cost of leave, employee insurance, pensions and unemployment benefit plans.

 Travel - Specify the mileage, per diem, estimated number of trips in-State and out-of-State, number of travelers, and other costs for each type of travel. Travel may be integral to the purpose of the proposed project (e.g. inspections) or related to proposed project activities (e.g. attendance at meetings). Travel costs do not include: (1) costs for travel of consultants, contractors, consortia members, or other partner organizations, which are

included in the “Contractual” category; (2) travel costs for employees of subrecipients under subawards, which are included in the “Other” category.

 Equipment - Identify each item to be purchased which has an estimated acquisition cost of $5,000 or more per unit and a useful life of more than one year. Equipment also includes accessories necessary to make the equipment operational. Equipment does not include: (1) equipment planned to be leased/rented, including lease/purchase agreement; or (2) equipment service or maintenance contracts. These types of proposed costs should be included in the “Other” category. Items with a unit cost of less than $5,000 should be categorized as supplies, pursuant to 40 CFR 31.3 and 30.2. The budget detail must include an itemized listing of all equipment proposed under the project.

 Supplies - “Supplies” means all tangible personal property other than “equipment”. The budget detail should identify categories of supplies to be procured (e.g., laboratory supplies or office supplies). Non-tangible goods and services associated with supplies, such as printing service, photocopy services, and rental costs should be included in the “Other” category.

 Contractual - Identify each proposed contract and specify its purpose and estimated cost. Contractual/consultant services are those services to be carried out by an individual or organization, other than the applicant, in the form of a procurement relationship. Leased or rented goods (equipment or supplies) should be included in the “Other” category. The applicant should list the proposed contract activities along with a brief description of the scope of work or services to be provided, proposed duration, and proposed procurement method (competitive or noncompetitive), if known.

 Other - List each item in sufficient detail for EPA to determine the reasonableness and allowability of its cost. This category should include only those types of direct costs that do not fit in any of the other budget categories. Examples of costs that may be in this category are: insurance, rental/lease of equipment or supplies, equipment service or maintenance contracts, printing or photocopying, rebates, and subaward costs. Subawards (e.g., subgrants) are a distinct type of cost under this category. The term “subaward” means an award of financial assistance (money or property) by any legal agreement made by the recipient to an eligible subrecipient. This term does not include procurement purchases, technical assistance in the form of services instead of money, or other assistance in the form of revenue sharing, loans, loan guarantees, interest subsidies, insurance, or direct appropriations. Subcontracts are not subawards and belong in the contractual category. Applicants must provide the aggregate amount they propose to issue as subaward work and a description of the types of activities to be supported.

 Indirect Charges - If indirect charges are budgeted, indicate the approved rate and base. Indirect costs are those incurred by the grantee for a common or joint purpose that benefit more than one cost objective or project, and are not readily assignable to specific cost objectives or projects as a direct cost. In order for indirect costs to be allowable, the applicant must have a federal or state negotiated indirect cost rate (e.g., fixed, predetermined, final or

provisional), or must have submitted a proposal to the cognizant Federal or State agency. Examples of Indirect Cost Rate calculations are shown below:

- Personnel (Indirect Rate x Personnel = Indirect Costs)
- Personnel and Fringe (Indirect Rate x Personnel & Fringe = Indirect Costs)
- Total Direct Costs (Indirect Rate x Total direct costs = Indirect Costs)
- Direct Costs minus distorting or other factors such as contracts and equipment
  (Indirect Rate x (total direct cost – distorting factors) = Indirect Costs)

Example Budget Table

	EPA Funding	**Cost-Share
Personnel		
(1)Project Manager @ 40/hr x 10 hrs/wk x 52 wks		$20,800
(5)Project Staff @ 30 hr/wk x 40 hrs/wk x 40 wks	$244,000	
TOTAL PERSONNEL	$244,000	$20,800
Fringe Benefits		
20% of Salary and Wages	20%(244,800)	20%(20,800)
-Retirement, Health Benefits, FICA, SUI	$48,800	$4,160
TOTAL FRINGE BENEFITS	$48,800	$4,160
Travel		
Travel for Project Manager and Staff: 500 mi/mo @ $0.55/mi x 12 mos.	$3,300	
Travel for Project Staff: 20 trips/mo x $2,500/trip	$600,000	
TOTAL TRAVEL	$303,300	
Equipment		
TOTAL EQUIPMENT	0	
Supplies		
Office and related supplies to support training	$150,000	
TOTAL SUPPLIES	$150,000	
Contractual		
Support Services Contract	$100,000	
TOTAL CONTRACTUAL	$100,000	
Other		
Travel for tribal representatives to attend workshop training 100 trips x $1,000 each	$100,000	
Travel for tribal representatives to attend workshop training 200 trips x $2,000 each	$400,000	
TOTAL OTHER	$500,000	
Indirect Charges		
Federal Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate = 10% (Indirect Rate x Personnel = Indirect Costs)	$26,480	

TOTAL INDIRECT	$26,480	
TOTAL FUNDING	$1,397,540	$24,960
TOTAL PROJECT COST	$1,422,500	

** Cost-Share funds, while not required, must also be included on the SF-424A as detailed in Section III.B of this announcement.

Note on Management Fees: When formulating budgets for proposals, applicants must not include management fees or similar charges in excess of the direct costs and indirect costs at the rate approved by the applicant's cognizant Federal audit agency, or at the rate provided for by the terms of the agreement negotiated with EPA. The term "management fees or similar charges" refers to expenses added to the direct costs in order to accumulate and reserve funds for ongoing business expenses, unforeseen liabilities, or for other similar costs that are not allowable under EPA assistance agreements. Management fees or similar charges cannot be used to improve or expand the project funded under this agreement, except to the extent authorized as a direct cost of carrying out the work plan.